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A

SHORT ACCOUNT

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THE PROVINCE

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NEW ENGLAND,

I N

NORTH AMERICA,

From the First DISCOVERY thereof;

SELECTED FROM

VARIOUS AUTHORS,

WITH

ADDITIONAL REMARKS.

L O N D O N :

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H I S T O R Y, &c.

OF all the colonies planted by the English in North America, there are none, the detail of whose history is more curious, or which furnishes us with more lively instances of the vicissitudes of human affairs, and the blessings always attendant on industry, than the province of New England. The remarkable rapidity of its increase, the various difficulties which the first settlers experienced, the different views and discordant passions of the Colonists, which in the end centers in the general good of the colony, are subjects equally interesting, as they are remarkable and uncommon. And yet it should seem something surprising, that scarce any of our historians should have thought it worthy their notice, to mark the different revolutions of their governments, or even the circumstances of their first migration.

In the course of this our short (but we hope that our candid readers will not find incorrect) history, we have endeavoured to consult the impartial, not the most flowery, historians. We have endeavoured to keep, as much as possible, from

from that violence of party-rage with which too many of them are strongly marked, and selected with much industry those particulars, which we judged the most interesting and entertaining to our readers, have the more briefly passed over those parts, which are either un-entertaining or un-important to the history.

We have been particularly careful to mark the progress and changes of their government, which seems peculiarly necessary to the understanding the sources of the present unhappy rebellion, and satisfying ourselves with barely pointing them out, we have left the reader to make his own reflections.

The province of New England extends along the sea, from Nova Scotia to New York; it occupies an extent of coast about 300 miles in length, from 41 N. lat. to 45. By this situation in the middle of the temperate zone, it should enjoy the same air as Languedoc, Italy, and the other parts of Europe under the same parallel of latitude. Notwithstanding which the winter is found much colder than even in Great Britain.

We have very little acquaintance with this country, or the traffic carried on with the natives, till the voyage of Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold, in the year 1602. Cabot did no more

than reconnoitre the coast when he discovered the continent of America. Amidas and Barlow, who traded to Virginia on the part of a company formed by Sir Walter Ralieggh with a design of establishing a colony, did not penetrate so far as this country; and Sir Francis Drake, who made a descent, stayed only a very short time.

So little was this part of the coast known or frequented before Gosnold's arrival, that the vestiges of the former navigators were entirely effaced, and mere hazard brought the Captain to it. The English, who scarce visited the Eastern coast of North America, till after Sir Walter Ralieggh's attempt of forming a colony, neither knew the extent of it, nor even the proper voyage to it. Their usual way was by the Canaries and Caribbees, which increased their voyage more than a thousand leagues.

A variety of circumstances led Gosnold to imagine, that there must be a shorter passage. To proceed so far to the South, in order to arrive at a latitude not more than six degrees beyond the parallel of Great Britain, appeared absurd in every view. On the contrary, if instead of turning to the South, he should sail immediately to the West, he very justly concluded, he should not only find it a far more expeditious voyage,
but

but also avoid the variety of climate, to which his predecessors were subject.

When therefore he set sail from Dartmouth, he directed his course almost entirely to the West. By this route he arrived at some islands, situated on the Northern coast of a bay, at present called Massachusetts's bay.

Gosnold having no other views than commerce, and not finding this place likely to answer his purpose, sailed towards the South. After having spent the whole night in this attempt, he was much surprised in the morning, instead of finding himself at large, to perceive himself in the midst of a bay, forming a cape which projected a considerable way into the sea. At this place he cast anchor, giving it the name Cape Cod, on account of the quantity of that species of fish with which it abounded.—A name which it to this day retains.

He made a descent into two small islands in the neighbourhood of Cape Cod, the one he called Elizabeth's Island, and the other Martha's Vineyard; names by which they still continue to be distinguished. Though his stay was not more than about a month, yet so advantageous was his traffic with the natives, and in such pleasing colours did he represent the place, as to induce his employers, the merchants
of

of Plymouth and Exeter, to undertake a settlement in this new country.

1606 It happened at that time that some merchants, and others of considerable property in London, had conceived a design of planting a colony in another part of Virginia; for under that name did they then comprehend the whole extensive continent from Florida to Nova Scotia. These therefore readily concurred with the Plymouth merchants in soliciting a charter of the king for that purpose. James I. granted them Letters Patent, bearing date April 10, by which they composed two companies, distinguished by the names of the first and second Colony of Virginia. To the London adventurers he granted the property of an hundred miles of territory, in any part of America, between 34 and 41 degrees, and to the adventurers of Plymouth and Exeter, the same space between 38 and 45.

But in order, as it should seem, to prevent the ill consequences of a dispute among the Colonists, or least their future progress should be obstructed for want of a sufficient extent of territory, he did not permit them to unite their possessions, nor to leave a space less than one hundred miles between each settlement. The king reserved to himself nothing more than a fifth part of the gold they might hereafter find in the
lands

lands granted to them. Nothing but the idea of discovering some gold or silver mines made them, at that time, ambitious of a foot of American ground. It was this that occasioned Sir Walter Ralieggh's expedition, and gained him that favour and assistance he met with from the court; and to this all the numerous and extensive colonies, formed in that part of the Continent, in some measure owe their origin.

The Plymouth company, previous to transplanting their colony, sent in the same year, a vessel under the command of Henry Challons, who foolishly pursuing the old rout by the Antilles, was taken by the Spaniards. This accident so damped the spirits of the company, that perhaps the project had been abandoned, if Lord Popham, who was particularly active in the affair, had not fitted out another vessel, at his own private expence. A successful voyage revived their former impressions. They equipped, with all possible expedition, two small vessels, on board which an hundred men embarked with all necessary provision. Every thing seemed now to promise fair; their voyage was performed without any disagreeable accident. And their more sanguine friends already viewed in prospect a flourishing colony. When the death of Lord Popham,

Popham, which happened soon after, drew along with it the fall of this rising settlement.

Nevertheless mariners still continued to visit these coasts, attracted by the advantages afforded them by their commerce for skins with the natives, and the quantity of fish with which we have before mentioned these seas abounded.

1614 Among the rest Mr. John Smith, formerly president of the Southern Colony of Virginia, came in company with another ship, of which one Hunt was Captain, as commander of a vessel for the purposes above mentioned. Whilst his associates were employed in fishing, he drew a plan of the country, at some distance from the sea, and presented it at his return to Prince Charles, afterwards King of England, who first gave the colony the name of New England, which it has retained ever since his time.

Smith's voyage proving particularly favourable, in some degree revived the hopes of the original adventurers. But sending a vessel to realize their territories, the savages, jealous of the frequent visits of the English, and dissatisfied with their former traffic, (more particularly it is said at the treachery of Hunt in selling sixteen of the natives, whom he had enticed on board his ship) attacked them immediately on their debarkation. Another attempt,

tempt, made a few years after, met with the same obstacle, and consequently no better success. These difficulties so discouraged them, that the project was now entirely laid aside. They made no other use of their charter, than granting small portions of land on the sea coast, to different merchants for the purpose of establishing little factories, for the commodities with which the savages supplied them. It is indeed highly probable, the design of forming a colony had been entirely forgotten, had not some fresh circumstances brought persons of consequence to patronize such an undertaking.

The Non-conformists had, for some considerable time, grown daily more disaffected to government; however during the reign of Elizabeth, being suffered, though secretly, to practise their modes of worship without much persecution, they bore their situation tolerably well, and preferred their native country to the hazards of the ocean and an uncertain climate. But when, towards the latter end of James's reign, the persecution against them grew more intollerable, and they saw less hopes of ever enjoying the peaceable practice of their religion, they resolved rather to part with their native country and connections, than renounce, what they esteemed, the pure religion of Jesus-Christ. It is not our

intention to enter into a discussion of their principles or complaints, they seemed to possess a mixture of enthusiasm and sincerity, or they could never have endured the hardships, they must be sensible they were about to encounter.

Notwithstanding therefore the fate of the former adventurers, notwithstanding the jealousy they knew the savages entertained of the English, notwithstanding the difference of climate, the laborious way of life compared with their former situations; in short, in spite of all the obstacles that lay in their way, they resolved to attempt a settlement. Mr. John Breiver, Mr. J. Robinson, and a minister of the name of Browniste was at their head; but when they thought they had considered every difficulty that was likely to oppose them, a new one started.—The government refused them leave to depart for America. At length, by indefatigable industry, having surmounted this obstacle, after treating with the Plymouth company, they set sail on the 6th of September, 1621. Their number consisted in this first migration of no more than one hundred and twenty persons.

The course they steered brought them to Cape Cod. As this place did not form a part of the country ceded to them, they endeavoured to tack to the South: but tempestuous weather, and the rigour

rigour of the season (being the latter end of November) obliged them to settle at the place where they first arrived. Finding themselves thus beyond the limits ceded to them, and consequently in a place under the protection neither of England or any other power in Europe; being thus, as it were, reduced to a state of natural liberty, they began by drawing up an act, by which they acknowledged themselves the subjects to the Crown of Great Britain, and bound themselves mutually to obey those laws, which were made by common consent for the general good of the Society. All the heads of the families, to the Number of 41, signed this agreement, and chose Mr. John Carver, a gentleman of considerable fortune, their governor for one year.—We here see an instance of a government formed by a set of men of improved reason, unshackled by any foreign force, and unimpeded by native barbarity.

The new Colonists chose a convenient Harbour in the Bay of Cape Cod for their settlement; to which, from the inherent partiality to their native soil, they gave the name of New Plymouth. By a variety of difficulties with which they had struggled, they found their numbers reduced to nineteen families. Each chose for his habitation a spot of ground of a perch in length,
and

and three in breadth. And to prevent future disputes they divided, by lot, the spaces which were to compose the extent for their little town. Such were the trifling beginnings of the colony of New England ; before the present unhappy disputes one of the most flourishing, for commerce and manufactories, of any throughout the new world ! For some time their progress was but slow. Eight years after their first establishment they counted only 800 souls. Nevertheless, so flourishing was the commerce of this little colony, that they were already in a condition to reimburse those, by whose assistance they had been established.

1629

The inhabitants of New Plymouth having no authority from the Crown, to hold the lands on which their town was built, were apprehensive lest some of the courtiers about the throne should beg the property of it and dispossess them ; to prevent these disagreeable circumstances they engaged their then governor (William Bradford) to solicit in his own name the grant of it, which when he had obtained they purchased it of him, and became themselves the Lords Proprietors.

As soon as it was found in England that this colony was established on a sufficiently solid foundation, to leave no fear of its dispersion, a
great

great number of the Non-conformists concurred in the design of retiring to it, with a view to avoid those religious restraints, which, they complained, grew daily more unsupportable since Charles had ascended the throne.

Whether the motives on which the Non-conformists acted were just in themselves, or how far their complaints were well founded, we shall not take upon us to determine in so contracted a work. The period, of which we are now writing, has been thoroughly canvassed by men of all denominations; and few, very few have written with that candour and impartiality, which becomes an Historian. Certain however it is, that the extensive powers with which the High Commission was intrusted, leaving no civil security to the Puritans, was the cause of their migrating to seek an asylum in this new and distant world.

About this time Mr. John White, a minister of Dorchester, having obtained their patent of the Plymouth Company, formed a society to attempt a settlement in Massachusetts Bay. They equipped a fleet of six sail, on board which 350 persons embarked with 115 head of cattle, some goats, rabbits, &c. together with six pieces of cannon and other military apparatus. The fleet sailed on the 1st of May, and cast anchor on the 24th of June, 1628

June, in a part, to this day called the town of Salem, which these new Colonists built. Such a migration as this could not but make some noise, and presently became an example to the Non-conformists, which they did not fail to imitate.

The year following, a number of persons of all ranks and both sexes, came in a fleet of ten sail, to re-inforce the rising colony of Massachusetts Bay. Many towns round about Salem owe their origin to these people; among the rest Boston, so famous as the capital of the Province, and the seat of the present war at the commencement; Charlestown, (burnt down at the unhappy engagement of Bunker's-hill,) Dorchester, Watertown and others.

1635

Not many years after, a fleet of no less than 20 sail came to anchor in the same Bay; part of the passengers went to settle, a short time after, near the banks of Connecticut river, and there laid the first foundations of the towns of Hartford, Windsor, Weatherfield, Springfield and several others, having been authorized by the Massachusetts Assembly. Being situated beyond the limits of that government, they formed a distinct constitution, engaging themselves mutually to obey those laws, which passed by a plurality of voices in their assemblies. This settlement

ment still goes by the name of Connecticut, on account of the river on the borders of which it is situated.

The Puritans finding the causes, which occasioned their first migration, daily encrease, many considerable persons among them conceived the design of living in America. The Lords Say, Brooks and various others, among which some mention Cromwell himself, were on the point of departing from England, and settling on some lands they had purchased of the Earl of Warwick. Afterwards, finding they were likely to succeed in their opposition to Charles, they renounced their plan, and sold their lands to the Connecticut Colony. The English however still continued to flock in such numbers, that the Massachusetts Plantation was actually overstocked. A number of persons settled on different places about the mouth of the river Connecticut and built Guilford, Milford, Stamford and Newhaven, which last gave name to the whole colony. Having neither charter nor commission to hold their lands, they purchased them of the natives, and by that means acquired a *natural right*. They afterwards formed themselves into a body politic in the manner of the other colonies.

In the mean time the frontiers of New England, were enlarging themselves towards the N.

East

East, by some detachments from Massachusetts Bay, who built several towns, composing in the whole, the two counties of New Hampshire and Maine, which were added to the Massachusetts's government. The year following another set of adventurers formed those settlements known by the name of Providence.

1638

No sooner had the New Englanders began to flourish in their settlements, than the same spirit of intolerance appeared among themselves, against which they had so bitterly complained in others. Quakers, Baptists and other Sectaries, differing from them in mere trifling tenets, were persecuted with the most unremitting obstinacy.

1640

The Quakers seemed particularly destined to feel the rigour of their ill-timed severity. A number of these therefore being unable to enjoy that tranquility and undisturbed way of life, which seems the peculiar wish of these people, purchased a tract of ground, on which they built the Colony of Rhode Island. Notwithstanding this step, dissensions and persecutions still continued among them, so that, a few years after, Charles was obliged to interpose his authority, to settle the peace of the colony. Even then as if this species of fanaticism had needed a substitute, they accused many people of witchcraft

craft, and some actually suffered for this pretended crime.

Thus have we given, a general detail of the formation of each colony! They had each of them their different laws, and magistrates chosen by themselves. But, altho each formed a separate government, yet were they united by confederacy, for such things as related to their common interest. This alliance they confirmed in the year 1643, and took upon themselves the name of the *United Colonies of New England*. By virtue of which, two commissioners were to be appointed by each settlement, to decide on the affairs of New England, according to the directions of their respective constituents. This was, in some measure setting up a government of themselves, independent of Great Britain, but Great Britain was not at that time in a condition, either to defend them from any foreign enemy, or to prevent their taking such steps as they judged necessary for their own safety. She was distracted by a thousand different factions, and the empire itself seemed to totter from the licentiousness of the Republicans on the one hand, and the too high notions of Royal Prerogative on the other. Many of the laws made by these commissioners would have done honour to a Roman Senate, and shews that these people were

not altogether composed of the refuse of Great Britain, but had arrived at very enlarged notions of the nature of government, without the detestible refinements of more civilized states.

1648

About this time New England found herself in a very flourishing state. She contained no less than 24 or 25,000 souls. She boasted of 50 well built towns or villages, 40 churches, a castle, forts, prisons, commodious roads, &c. If the reader should take a view of this colony not quite 30 years before, he will scarcely conceive so sudden an increase possible. Especially, when it is considered not only, that the combined force of Indians and Canadians conspired to check their progress, but also that the Dutch, who at that time inhabited New York, were not a little jealous of their flourishing situation. On the other hand, a variety of equally advantageous circumstances contributed to facilitate this increase. The Indians, though disaffected to the English, were prevented by internal dissensions among their Sachems or Princes, from frequently disturbing the peace of the colonies. This also led several of them at different times to form alliances with the English, in hopes of succeeding the better against their adversaries. The fertility of the soil, joined with the happy congruity of the climate, with English constitutions

stitutions was a circumstance no less favourable to their growth. The Discontents, on account of religion, whilst they distracted the parent state, and reduced her to a degree of distress, scarcely paralleled in any period of her history, forced her children to seek an asylum in these distant countries, and added new strength to this rising colony. But above all, the natural industry of the Colonists, their peculiar attachment to those arts, so serviceable to an infant state, must be considered as the principal cause of their felicity and increase. The regularity of the houses, the beauty of its streets, all well paved, the convenience of its magazines, ports, quays, and above all, the number of vessels belonging to the inhabitants, would have induced an unacquainted traveller to doubt whether the colony was really of a late establishment, or not.

The Colonies, during the fatal civil wars in Great Britain, continued daily to gain additional strength; nor was the administration of Cromwell less favourable to them; but when their jealousy was alarmed, by those circumstances in Charles the Second's conduct, (which we shall have presently occasion to mention) their progress slackened prodigiously. The charter which William the III^d granted them, though not so favourable as they wished, or expected,

pected, re-established their tranquility, revived their commerce, and restored their former abundance.

The government of New England continued in the manner we have described, till about the year 1683, when Charles the II^d deprived the Massachusets's Province of their charter; nor does it appear he ever granted them another, throughout his whole reign. Plymouth soon after shared the same fate. *A quo warranto* was issued against the Connecticut Colony, by which they were required, in case they chose to resign their charter, to rank themselves either in the government of New York, or Boston. The Colonists, sensible of the advantages they experienced from their present situation, returned for answer, "that they were so well satisfied with their charter, as not to wish to part with it; but if it were the King's pleasure they should, they preferred Boston to New York." This it seems, was interpreted a resignation of their charter, and Sir Edward Andross, Governor of Boston, went with some armed attendants to Hertford, declaring their charter and former government void—Rhode Island submitted itself to the Kings pleasure.*

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* A circumstance in the conduct of these two colonies, shews the character of the inhabitants in a very striking light. When their charter was required of them, instead

By these means did a total change take place in the government of New England. Almost all the provinces were united into one. But what was very singular, though New Hampshire was to continue a distinct government, yet the same person was always to be governor of Boston and that province.

Admitting that the conduct of the New Englanders, which occasioned these innovations, was unjustifiable in itself, yet there were other circumstances in Charles's behaviour, which gave the colonies still greater offence, and which they considered as contrary to the inherent privileges of a British subject. Sir Edward Andros ordered a tax, of one penny in the pound, to be levied on all towns under his government, and imprisoned several who were hardy enough to protest

of giving up that which they had received from the Massachusetts's assembly, 1635, they gave the one which Charles had granted them 1662. By this finesse, they continued to elect their own governor, officers of the Militia, &c. as by virtue of the original charter, which actually continued in force, till after the revolution. So that when William the III^d ordered B. Fletcher to take the command of the Militia in 1693, they refused to muster; in consequence of which, his Majesty, judging their charter equally void with those of the other colonies, reserved to himself the choice of their governors, and commander of the Militia; but the other offices remained as in the neighbouring provinces.

protest against it, as contrary to the privileges of Englishmen, to have their property taxed without either Assembly or Parliament. In the first year of King James's reign, they presented a petition to him, praying relief; but in answer seem to have received nothing but promises he never intended to perform. At length, when the news of the revolution in England arrived, tired of the arbitrary proceedings of their governor, and animated by that spirited effort, in the Mother Country, they took up arms, seized their governor, and, after keeping him some time in prison, sent him back to Europe.

They flattered themselves, at this period, that they might stand some chance to recover their ancient liberties; but as necessity compelled them to place themselves much under the protection of a power, whose interest, in this respect, was contrary to their own, they were of course, disappointed. William granted them a charter, by which they were re-instated in a part of their former privileges, and most of the obnoxious laws were laid aside.

By virtue of this charter, the nomination of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and officers of the Admiralty, are reserved to the Crown of Great Britain; the command of the Militia belongs to the Governor, as Captain General.

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The judges, sheriffs, and inferior magistrates were nominated by the governor, with the consent of the council.

The council were to be chosen by the assembly, in conjunction with the governor, whom they were to assist with their advice. This privilege, the last British Parliament thought necessary to take from them, and enacted, that in future the council should be chosen by the King, or governor; this law, together with the governor receiving his salary from the Crown, instead of the people, may be considered as no inconsiderable cause of the subsequent rebellion.

Every district, which contains more than thirty burghers, sends two deputies to the general assembly. A district containing only twenty burghers, sends only one deputy; Boston sends four.

All laws formed in the general assembly, were first to receive the consent of the governor, and afterwards of the king; and if within the space of three years, the king should think proper to reject them, they were considered as void.

Whilst England was wasting her blood and 1646
treasures in civil wars, during Charles's reign,
New England had leisure to concert a plan, the
most noble and generous in itself, in proportion

as it was disinterested and difficult.—The Propagation of the Gospel among the Indians. A minister of the name of Elliot, who afterwards acquired the title of Apostle to the Indians, enterprised the conversion of the natives to the Faith of Jesus Christ. As his genius was equal to almost any undertaking, so his industry was superior to any difficulty. With a degree of labour, which nothing but zeal could have supported him under, he not only learnt their language, but with scarce any other assistance, translated many books of piety; among the rest, the whole of the Bible, into their Savage Tongue.

1649

A few years after, the Parliament willing to second his pious labours, passed an act for encouraging the Propagation of the Christian Faith among the Indians in North America. By this act a society was formed, consisting of a President, Treasurer, &c. and authorised to receive the contributions of all persons willing to assist so pious an undertaking; and to dispose of such sums as they might collect in the same.

We have been the more particular in relating the circumstances which gave rise to this society, as being the first of the kind ever established within the territories of the British Crown, and which has by degrees risen to the state in which we lately saw it.

During

During the reign of King William the III^d, Sir William Phips, Governor of New England, raised an army, which he transplanted to Acadia, or Nova Scotia, and took Port Royal, or Anapolis, from the French. He also reduced a fort at the mouth of the River St. John, in Fundy Bay; of which, and the settlement belonging to it, the English kept possession, till the peace of Ryswick, when King William thought fit to cede it to France. After this Sir William Phips attempted the taking of Quebec; but the expedition being undertaken late in the year, and a very severe winter setting in sooner than ordinary, he was obliged to retire without effecting his purpose. Sir William however erected a fort at the mouth of the river Pemaquid, on the frontiers of New England, compelling the neighbouring Indians to acknowledge themselves the subjects of Great Britain.

In the beginning of Queen Anne's wars, the New Englanders recovered Anapolis, being unable to enjoy either their fishing, or foreign traffic, without it. At the peace of Utrecht, this, with the whole of Nova Scotia, was ceded to Great Britain, except Cape Breton, afterwards taken by the English in a siege, which lasted about forty-nine days.

As this action was undertaken and carried on

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1703

1714

1745

by the province of New England, it deserves a more particular detail. A merchant, of the name of Pepperel, who had originally formed the plan, was intrusted with the command of six thousand New Englanders, who were levied for this expedition; the whole expence being borne by the colony. These forces were conveyed by a squadron from Jamaica; whilst the troops, after securing their landing, were forming their camp and opening their trenches. A dispute happened between the French officers and soldiers, a circumstance not a little favourable to a Militia suddenly assembled, who had never faced a siege, or many perhaps an enemy, and were to act in great measure under sea officers. By these differences, the soldiers were prevented attacking, till an ill-conducted defence obliged them to capitulate. Cape Breton was afterwards restored to the French, at the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, and taken again in 1757, by the English under the brave General Wolfe. So high an opinion had the French of the importance of this place, that in this second expedition it was thought necessary by the ministry, to send no less than twenty-three ships of the line, and eighteen frigates, carrying sixteen thousand well disciplined troops. The garrison capitulated about the beginning of June.

We

We shall here close our account of the history of this province; all the following parts of it forming more properly the history of Great Britain. As to the forces of New England, we shall take the account of a late author equally remarkable for ingenuity and exactness. "In one of the representations (says he) of the Board of Trade, they inform the Privy Council, that, in the colony of Massachusset's Bay only, there are upwards of 94,000 souls, and that their militia consisted of six regiments of foot, and fifteen troops of horse, of one hundred men in each troop. The same representation shews that they employed near five hundred sail of ships, and four thousand seamen, annually in their trade."

According to the most exact calculation, says another able historian, the number of the inhabitants of New England, is computed at four hundred thousand. Among such a number, there are few wealthy enough to leave the care of their farms to stewards; most of them are planters, in easy circumstances, who live upon their estates, and are employed in the labours of the field.

Among the arts cultivated in this province, we reckon ship building the first. The country produced every article used in that art, and the
ships

ships that came out of their docks, were preferred to those of the other colonies ; but the wood for ship building having been little attended to, the numbers have considerably decreased. The distilling of rum has succeeded better ; for though that commodity has, by no means, arrived at the perfection among them, to which the Islanders have attained, yet the sale is not at all the less, as they are enabled to sell it at a very low price. The colonists make no cloths, and buy very few ; the fleeces of the flocks, which are long, though not fine, make very convenient clothing for plain country people. But their fishery has so rapidly succeeded among them, that what with the produce of their own coast, and their fisheries on the Great Banks, they have extended, this branch of their trade, through a considerable part of Europe.

It was our intention to have given some account of the other colonies of North America, and to have stated the rise and progress of the present unhappy differences ; but this part we are obliged to defer, for the present, finding it impossible to give it with that impartiality we could wish ; as the people of this country are too feelingly connected with, and interested in, the event of the present disputes.—Another opportunity may possibly offer

fer, wherein the materials now in our possession may be of use, and justify another publication on the subject of American matters. It may not however be amiss to shew, what share the New Englanders had in the first opening of the dispute.

It happened, unfortunately perhaps for the framers of the stamp act, that the news of it arrived first at Boston; whose republican principles have always shewn themselves in every emergency of this kind. Every countenance was instantly filled with melancholy: the ships in the harbour hanged out their colours half mast high, and every other method was invented, that tended to give the common people the most odious idea of it. Essays of various kinds, but all centering in the condemnation of the act, soon appeared; and long before the act, (as printed at the Kings Printing House,) could reach the colony, the populace were beyond measure exasperated. Most of the Captains that brought the stamps, were obliged to surrender their devoted cargoes, in order to save their vessels from conflagration. On the 1st of November, the time the act took place, scarce a sheet of stamp paper could be procured throughout the whole continent. At length, government finding it in vain, or thinking it an improper time, to strug-

1765

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gle against so obstinate a resistance ; the act was repealed.

1773 After this, the duty of three pence a pound on tea, proved another source of dissatisfaction, to the American Colonies ; but the inhabitants of this province thought proper to distinguish themselves in a particular manner on the occasion. As the time approached, when the ships were expected, the people began to assemble together, and take such methods, as seemed most effectual to prevent the landing of their cargoes. The consignees appointed by the East India Company, were obliged, at most places to relinquish their commissions. At length three ships arrived in Boston Harbour ; the Captains were obliged to promise, if they were permitted by the consignees, the board of customs, and the fort of Castle William, they would return to England. These promises could not be fulfilled. The custom house refused them a clearance, the governor a passport for the fort, and the consignees did not think they had sufficient authority to discharge them.

In this case it was easily seen, that the tea would be by degrees circulated among them. They had reason to believe, that, whilst the tea remained in the harbour, there was scarcely public spiritedness enough in the inhabitants, to refuse

fuse the purchase of so baneful an herb. A method, which if they had followed, would have effectually prevented the Company's sending any more amongst them, on so precarious a footing. To prevent therefore the dreaded consequence of its circulation, a number of persons, under the disguise of Mohawk Indians, boarded the ships, and in a few hours discharged the whole cargoe of tea into the sea.

In consequence of these violences, the Bill for the more impartial administration of justice, in the province of Massachusetts Bay, which gave so much offence to the inhabitants, succeeded, and to that was added the Boston Port Bill.

As soon as General Gage arrived, and these acts were known, the first resolution was, to stop all imports and exports to and from any part of the British dominions. In the mean time, Town meetings were multiplied in every part of the continent, and the cause of Boston became the cause of America. The consequences are known by most, and felt by many. But without entering into a minute discussion of the matter, we cannot help thinking, that the present disturbances are, in a great measure owing, to persons of more republican, than loyal principles, misleading the minds of the vulgar, and alienating their affections from the Mother Country. But
how

how much soever we may be inclined to condemn their resistance, we cannot help bestowing a short panegerick on the prudence they have shewn in supporting it. The unanimity, which pervaded all their councils, the regularity of their meetings, the willingness in each individual to fit himself for the use of arms, and his readiness to assist the cause of his country, joined to the extraordinary celerity, with which they established a new form of government, and raised a numerous and well disciplined army, are circumstances hardly to be paralleled in the history of any nation, and may serve to convince us, that the conquest of America is not so near at hand, as we at first imagined.—This reflection may, we think, be not improperly drawn from their conduct; that were we but as unanimous in supporting our freedom and property, and as willing to learn the military exercise to defend it in our own person, instead of employing others for that purpose. No nation on earth would dare to invade these kingdoms, and commerce must flow to us in an uninterrupted channel, when protected by the Navy. The vigilance with which our Militia would guard our coasts, would enable government to dispose of the Standing Army, the better to secure our territories, and conquests abroad,

F I N I S,